THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) By the 22nd Amendment to the Income Tax Rules 1961, the Government of India had amended Rule 3(6) whereby, the value of free and concessional passages provided by an undertaking involved in transportation of passengers would be valued at the rate at which the same is offered to the public. Thus, it could be implied that the free passages of all Airline employees would come under the purview of Rule 3(6) of the Income Tax Act 1961 relating to valuation of perquisites.

(b) and (c) A National Action Committee consisting of various Unions/ Associations/Guilds of airlines had given a notice to go on one day token strike from 0600 hours of 20 February, 2003 to 0600 hours on 21 February, 2003 to protest against Income Tax on free/concessional passages utilised by Airline employees. The proposed strike was subsequently called off following an assurance from the Ministry of Finance that the matter has been favourably considered.

Concession to senior citizens on foreign travel

†4645. SHRI HARISH RAWAT : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are considering to give some concession in air fares to the senior citizens for going abroad in Indian aeroplanes; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) and (b) Air India had introduced a promotional Senior Citizen fares approximately 25% lower than the prevailing market fare, on India-London-New York and India-Europe sectors during the off-peak season *viz.* mid September to mid December, 2002. This promotional fare was reintroduced for outbound travel effective 15th February, 2003 to 31st March, 2003. Indian Airlines offers 50% discount on the normal economy class fare to Senior Citizens on domestic sectors only.

IA's advertisement policy

4646. SHRI S.S. CHANDRAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the policy followed by Indian Airlines with regard to advertisements;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines ads are shown on FTV; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the reasons for showing the ads on a channel which is polluting young minds and Indian culture ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) Indian Airlines releases advertisements in the print and electronic media to promote various schemes launched by it from time to time, to give wide publicity to its operating schedule and the facilities offered to the passengers. The advertisements are released keeping in mind the message beamed, target audience and the areas/regions to be covered.

(b) and (c) Indian Airlines has released only one advertisement on FTV, aimed at women passengers, promoting its Lady Executive Offer under the Executive Bonanza Scheme.

Airport at Ajmer (Rajasthan)

†4647. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to states :

(a) whether Government are having any scheme to build an airport in Ajmer (Rajasthan); and

(b) if so, the details thereof and by when the said scheme is going to be implemented ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has received various requests for construction of an airport at Ajmer in Rajasthan.

(b) AAI has requested the State Government of Rajasthan to provide the required land free of cost for construction of an airport.

Employment opportunity to AME Engineers

†4648. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a sharp increase in the number of AME diploma holders passed out from technical training institutes recognised by Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have formulated any scheme to provide employment to such unemployed engineers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.